

## POSTMARK IDENTIFIES PERFIN

While identification of a perfin's user usually requires a cover with an appropriate return address, this is not always necessary. We recently encountered an example of the common Italian perfin "LT" used on a picture postcard (giving no direct clue as to the user) with the unusual cancellation:

P<sup>FO</sup> HELOUAN . LLOYD TRIESTINO

In the brief message, the sender mentions he is en route to Cairo. This suggested that the "Lloyd Triestino" in the cancellation might in fact identify the "LT" of the perfin; Lloyd Triestino is apparently a large Italian shipping line carrying both passengers and freight. The "P<sup>FO</sup> HELOUAN" portion of the cancellation was a bit more mysterious. Helouan is evidently the Italian equivalent for Helwan (now called, in Arabic, Hulwan), an Egyptian port on the Nile some miles south of Cairo, near the pyramids. One might suppose "P<sup>FO</sup>" is "PTO" = Porto = Port, but the cancellation shows quite clearly "P<sup>FO</sup>". Scanning an Italian-English dictionary suggested P<sup>FO</sup> = Piroscapo = Steamer (or Steamship), so that "Helouan" would likely be the name of the ship, rather than the name of the city. This would obviously be an appropriate name for a craft travelling regularly to Cairo.

In summary, the postcard was evidently posted on board the steamer "Helouan" of the Lloyd Triestino lines, bound for Cairo; the stamp, purchased on board the ship, bears the identifying letters of the shipping line. Can our readers suggest other instances of perfins whose users are identified by a postmark?